

# Police transparency review

## National benchmarking report for the Police and Crime Commissioner for Wiltshire and Swindon

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November 2013



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# Agenda

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## Personal introductions



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Simon has over 30 years experience of auditing in the public sector. This includes the police, fire, local government and NHS sectors. Previously employed by the Audit Commission, Simon was involved in the development of the Commission's Value for Money approach. Simon is currently part of Grant Thornton's South West Management Team and audits a range of clients including police, unitary councils and the NHS.



**Chris Rockey**

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Chris is a manager in our public sector team with extensive external audit experience of local government accounts and value for money. Chris was formerly with the Audit Commission where amongst other roles he specialised in VFM and subsequently public rights and local government challenge. He is the Grant Thornton South West Regional Challenge lead. Chris has been the manager for Wiltshire Police for two years and also manages Sedgemoor District Council, Mendip District Council, and Weston Area NHS Trust.

# About Grant Thornton

**Grant Thornton UK LLP** is a leading financial and business adviser to the public and private sectors. The firm is led by over 200 partners and employs nearly 4,500 of the profession's brightest minds, operating throughout the UK.

The police sector is a chosen area of investment for the firm. As the largest external auditor of police bodies in England and Wales, we work closely with clients and other key stakeholders to help inform and shape the sector's response to the changes brought about by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act. Our services to the sector include value-added assurance, advice on governance and the development of accountability frameworks.

Grant Thornton also provides a wide range of other business and financial advisory services, drawing on our experience of working with dynamic private sector organisations. This includes advice in relation to estates projects and other major capital investment, business case development, joint ventures, performance and turnaround, organisational and operational efficiency, taxation, specialist corporate finance and due diligence.

In early 2014, Grant Thornton will be publishing *Police Governance: a Developing Picture*, the firm's first national report for the police sector. This report will discuss the wider governance agenda and share views on how well PCCs and forces have responded to the challenges and opportunities afforded by the PRSRA 2011.

Our police clients in the UK:



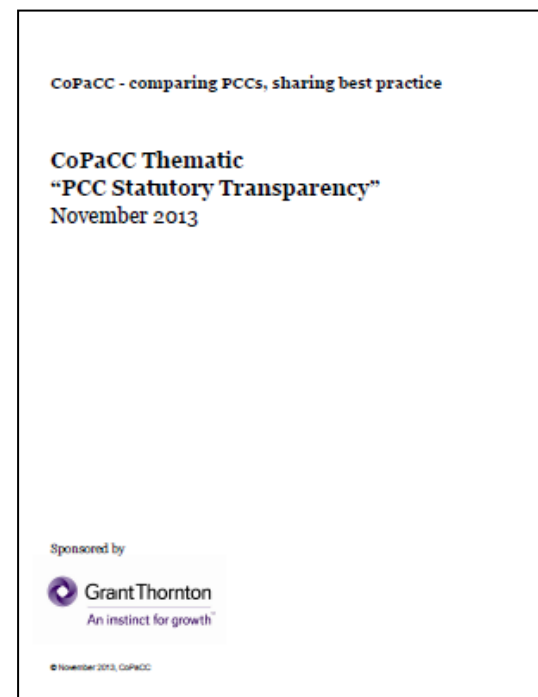
# Police transparency review

Since the time of Robert Peel, British policing has been founded on the principle that the police force performs most effectively when there is public trust and confidence in its actions. Yet events in recent years have underlined how fragile this trust and confidence can be when faced with the new and unexpected demands of modern policing. All police leaders therefore need to understand how open and transparent their organisation is seen to be.

One year ago, the election of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) heralded a new era of increased public accountability in the running of the police service in Britain. One of the stated aims of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act was to 'make the police more accessible, accountable and transparent to the public', putting openness and transparency at the heart of the mission of new PCCs. We have sponsored a report by CoPaCC, a police 'think tank', into PCC transparency, to show the extent to which English and Welsh PCCs are living up to these ideals by making documents freely available on their website and complying with the disclosure requirements of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

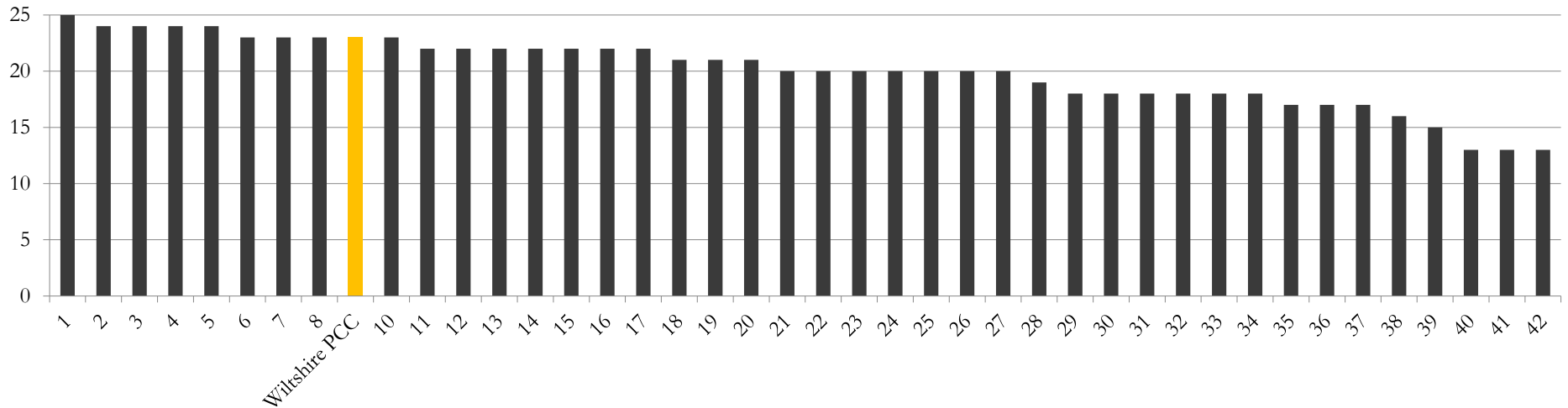
Key findings were that:

- **The overall level of disclosure on OPCC websites is good** – 20 of the 25 primary disclosures were available on websites, with 64% of OPCCs having at least 80% of the primary disclosures on their websites. However, we could only find one OPCC where all 25 primary disclosures were available
- **The majority of PCCs make the key governance disclosures** – including senior staff salaries (disclosed by 90%), registers of interests (disclosed by 88%) and registers of gifts, donations and hospitality (disclosed by 88%)
- **Areas where OPCCs appear to perform less well are in respect of more detailed aspects of the organisation** – such as the identity of premises or land used by the PCC (disclosed by 57%), copies of collaboration agreements (disclosed by 36%) and the use of police force or local authority staff (disclosed by 29%).

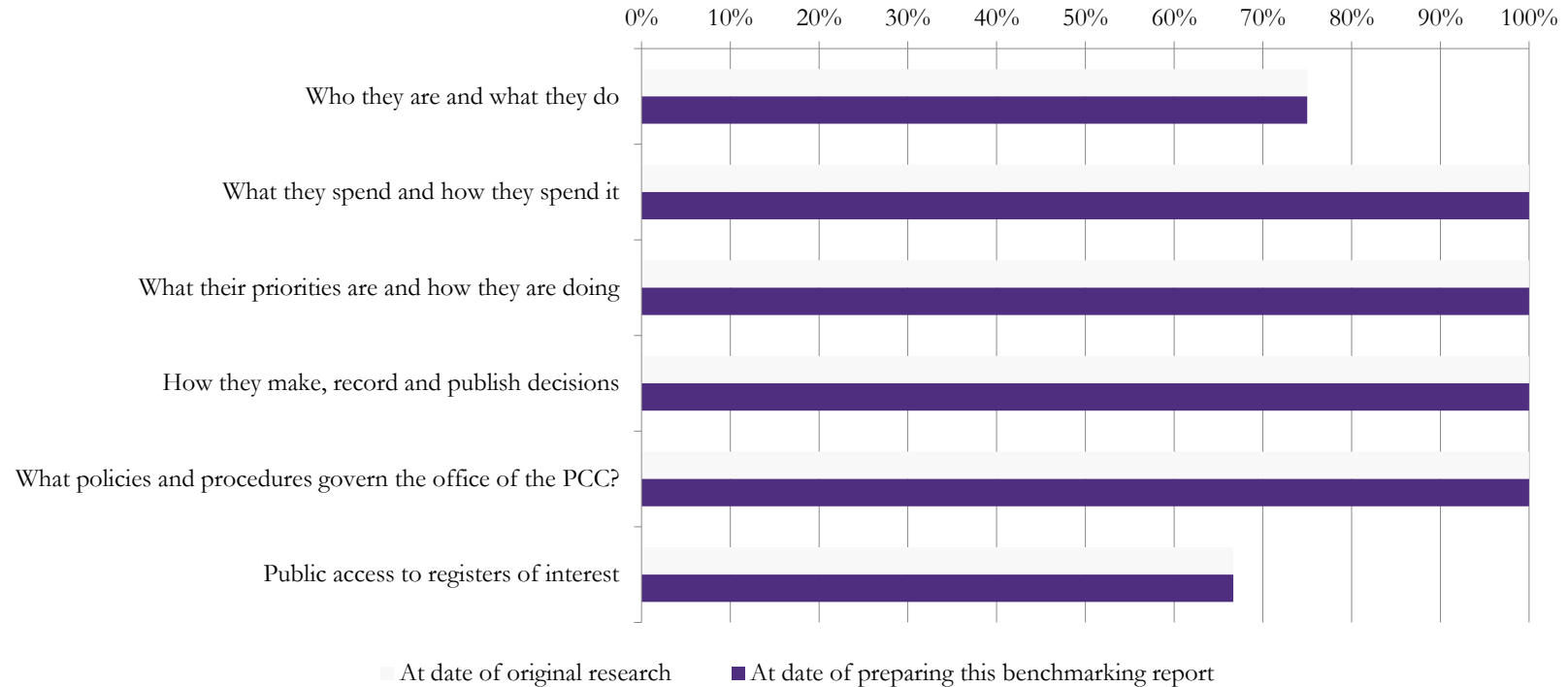


# Overall performance for the Police and Crime Commissioner for Wiltshire and Swindon

## Primary factors on website



# Your performance in detail



*A detailed breakdown of 'missing' disclosures for Wiltshire and Swindon is included at Appendix One on p.13.*

# Qualitative comments

The openness and transparency of your website cannot be summed up in numbers alone. Here are some qualitative comments based on the research we have carried out.

Who they are and what they do	What they spend and how they spend it	What their priorities are and how they are doing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The information provided on the PCC team is useful, as is the structure chart.</li> <li>• There is good disclosure of diversity information. Could this be improved by indicating how this has changed over time?</li> <li>• There is no indication as to whether the PCC makes use of force staff, or staff of a local authority.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 'How your money is spent' section includes the financial statements and the budget. However, there is no direct link to in-year financial performance, and no documents outlining this could be found on the website.</li> <li>• It is not clear whether &gt;£500 expenditure data relates to the PCC, Chief Constable or both.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The PCC's priorities are clearly set out on the website on the 'Priorities' page.</li> <li>• The 'One Year On' booklet provides valuable information on the work of the PCC and how this is progressing against his priorities.</li> <li>• Minutes of the South West Regional Collaboration meetings (involving the PCC and CC) would be a good addition to the website.</li> </ul>



# Qualitative comments

The openness and transparency of your website cannot be summed up in numbers alone. Here are some qualitative comments based on the research we have carried out.

How they make, record and publish decisions	What policies and procedures govern the office of the PCC	Public access to registers of interest
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A list of decisions made by the PCC is easily accessible on the PCC's website.</li> <li>• Meeting dates are included on the website, but minutes are not added for these meetings held with the public, or for the Commissioner's Monitoring Board. Minutes provide an important resource to ensure transparency and enable members of the public to understand how decisions have been reached.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The PCC's key policies and procedures are easily accessible from the home page.</li> <li>• Details of custody visiting are available on the 'take part' page.</li> <li>• Business Strategies are available on the website under the 'Documents' heading, including Information Management, Procurement and Collaboration strategies. These were rolled forward from the Police Authority and therefore no longer reflect the environment, and as such need to be updated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whilst full details of how to make Freedom of Information requests is disclosed on the website, there is no log of the requests received by the PCC and his responses.</li> <li>• Registers of Interest and Gifts &amp; Hospitality are easily found on the website and appear to be updated periodically.</li> </ul>

# Questions for you

Openness and transparency are a key feature of good governance in all organisations. However, transparency is just one of a suite of processes and behaviours that support effective governance.

The questions on this page highlight some of the important developments in your organisation and in the police sector. They should encourage thought about how governance may need to develop in future. They can be used to challenge yourself or to start practical discussions with others about your organisation's governance practices and culture.

What would need to change, if anything, to improve the effectiveness of your key collaboration arrangements?

How do you plan to use the new powers included in the PRSRA 2011?

How will you manage the risks of commissioning services from new and different providers?

What examples of governance failure have we seen in the sector?

What would be the consequence if these were repeated in your area?

How confident are you that your office has sufficient resources to engage effectively with the public?

How well do members of the Police and Crime Panel and the Audit Committee understand their role?

What are the key risks your office faces?

Are those the same risks faced by the force?

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# Next steps

Today we have:

- presented the findings from our review of transparency in the police service;
- shown where Wiltshire and Swindon sits in comparison to its peers;
- discussed the principles of good governance, and related those to your organisation and the sector.

In early 2014, Grant Thornton will be publishing *Police Governance: a Developing Picture*, the firm's first national report for the police sector. This report will discuss the wider governance agenda and share views on how well PCCs and forces have responded to the challenges and opportunities afforded by the PRSRA 2011.

We are therefore keen to continue this conversation with you over the coming months. Please contact us if we are able to support you in any way.



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# Notes



# Appendix One: detailed list of missing disclosures

Transparency factor	Found on website at date of research?	Found on website at 26 November ?
<b>Who they are and what they do</b>		
Information about any arrangements that the PCC has to make use of staff of the chief officer of police or a local authority	x	x
<b>Public access to registers of interest</b>		
List of Fol requests received, and their response	x	x



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